THE IMPACT OF PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIORS: A RESEARCH ON TURKISH ACADEMICIANS

Kemal Can Kilic, Fatma Nur Iplik, Azmi Yalcin

ABSTRACT: In recent years there has been a growing interest to the concept of person–organization fit, due to its benefits for employees and organizations. In this context, the consequences of theoretical and empirical researches show that individuals and organizations are most effective when their values, needs, and interests are aligned. Manifestations of this alignment, which often is called person-organization (P-O) fit, includes employee commitment, job satisfaction, organizational performance [1, 2, 3, and 4] and organizational citizenship behaviors.

P-O fit affects the degree to which an individual is liked by co-workers, supervisors, and subordinates, which may be related to many other aspects of individual and organizational effectiveness [5]. Because P-O fit has been positively related to job attitudes and negatively related to turnover intentions of employees, the congruence between individual and organizational values could be critical for the organizations. So that this study attempts to explore the relationship between the person-organization (P-O) fit and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) directed at organization (OCBO), co-workers (OCBC), and students (OCBS) and job satisfaction of academicians.

Congruence between the attributes of the person and the organization was expected to have a positive impact on OCB and job satisfaction. In order to find out these relationships, the data was collected from academicians of a State University in Turkey. Person-organization fit was measured by three items adapted from Cable&Judge [6]. OCB was measured a scale proposed by Lee&Allen [7] and job satisfaction was measured five items adapted by Brown&Peterson [8]. After the reliability, correlation and regression analyses, we conclude by discussing implications, limitations, and future research concerning the person–organization fit.

Keywords: Organizational Behavior, Person-Organization Fit, Organizational Citizenship Behaviors, Academic Staff, Turkey.

Person-Organization (P-O) Fit

The fit between a person and the work environment received attention from both scholars and practitioners in recent years [9, 10, 11, 12, and 13]. Practitioners who study in organizational psychology field initially focused on person and environment (P-E) subject to explain the relationship between person and organization. P-E is defined as the compatibility that occurs when personal and situational characteristics of employees are well-suited [14]. P-E fit studies have discerned between Person-Job fit, Person-Team fit and Person-Organization fit [15, 16]. The majority of P-E fit papers have evaluated individual features “needs and values” and situational/organizational characteristics “job demands and occupational type” for forecasting and clearing up the valuable results related with increased fit [17].

The most investigated subject within P-E fit is person–organization (P-O) fit. P-O fit subject has also received attention from a large number of theorists as well as P-E fit [18, 19, and 20]. P-O fit relates a person’s personality, goals and values with those of the organization. Most P-O fit studies have used needs and values as attributes of comparison between persons and organizations [21].

P-O fit refers to the compatibility between a person and the organization, emphasizing the extent to which a person and the organization share similar characteristics and meet each other’s needs [22]. Kristof [23] defined P-O fit as “compatibility between people and organization. Chatman’s [24] definition is “the congruence
between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons”. Many P-O fit studies [25, 26, 27, and 28] have examined the match between people’s values and those of the organization, because values are conceived of as fundamental and relatively enduring. Values represent conscious desires held by the person and encompass preferences, interests, motives and goals [29].

Some scholars (e.g. Kristof, Chapman etc.) categorized P-O fit according to their empirical studies. Kristof [30] identified four different operationalizations of P-O fit:

1. The first one is the congruence between individual and organizational values.
2. The second one is goal congruence with organizational leaders.
3. The third one is the match between individual preferences or needs and organizational systems and structures.
4. The fourth one is the match between the characteristics of individual personality and organizational climate.

As well to labeling demand-abilities and needs-supplies fit within P-O fit construct, P-O fit also includes supplementary fit and complementary fit, both of which are important in P-O fit studies [31, 32, and 33].

Piasentin and Chapman [34] identify four common definitions of P-O fit, namely:

1. **Supplementary fit** where an individual possesses characteristics that is similar to existing organizational characteristics.
2. **Complementary fit** where an individual fills a void or adds something that is missing in the organization.
3. **Needs-supplies fit** where an individual’s needs are fulfilled by the organization.
4. **Demand-abilities fit** where an individual’s abilities meet the demands of the organization.

Supplementary fit has to do with matching similar levels of characteristics between employees (personality traits, values, goals) and organizations (culture, values, norms), whereas complementary fit is concerned with bridging the gap between the patterns of these assessed characteristics, however, needs-supplies and abilities-demands fit have attracted more P-O fit researchers as they apply to congruence and vocational choice theories [35, 36, 37, and 38].

Organizational needs and individual needs are important factors in P-O fit investigations. Here is a sample list of ten organizational needs and ten individual needs for each organization included in Table 1. The degree of similarity be-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Needs</th>
<th>Individual Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty to the organization</td>
<td>Good salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard work</td>
<td>Job security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee cooperation</td>
<td>Being with other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Good supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following directions</td>
<td>Opportunity for promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good quality of work outcomes</td>
<td>Challenging work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to the organization’s objectives</td>
<td>Feeling of achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comradeship with colleagues</td>
<td>Good working conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for authority</td>
<td>Being involved in the organizational climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee satisfaction</td>
<td>Ability to take responsibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Silverthorne, 2004.

Empirical evidence has shown that a high level of P-O fit is related to a number of positive outcomes. P-O fit was found to be correlated with work attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. P-O fit was also found to predict intention of quit and turnover and was related to prosocial behaviors such as organizational citizenship behaviors [40, 41]. P-O fit is a positive attribute that is to be promoted. On the other hand, it presents dangers to the organization [42].

The Relationships between P-O Fit and Organizational Dynamics

P-O fit has been positively related to individuals’ job satisfaction, organizational commitment, tenure [43, 44], organizational citizenship behaviors [45, 46, and 47], and negatively related to turnover [48, 49]. P-O fit has also been studied as a potential inductor of job choice decisions, work attitudes (e.g. trust, commitment and satisfaction) [50, 51]. Conversely, P-O misfit would lead to disconnected personal values for the organization, bringing out emotion of low self-esteem and lack of trust [52, 53, 54, 55 and 55]. P-O misfit has been minimized motivation in work environment. Also low P-O fit has been shown to decrease organizational commitment [57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63 and 64].

Hoffman and Woehr [65] indicate that P-O fit is weakly to moderately related to job performance, organizational citizenship behaviors and turnover. P-O fit has strong correlations with job
satisfaction and organizational commitment and a more moderate correlation with intention to quit. The relationship between P-O fit and attitudinal dimensions including satisfaction with co-workers, satisfaction with supervisors and trust in management was moderate, while the correlation with organizational satisfaction was substantially higher. Specifically on the issue of performance, P-O fit has low correlations with overall job performance and task performance and moderate correlations with contextual performance [66, 67].

A high level of P-O fit is likely to increase commitment and motivation of employees toward task performance and their engagement in good and lasting relationships (mentoring relationships, organizational citizenship behaviors) with their employers, which in turn will result in positive organizational outcomes [68]. P-O fit has influence on many work behaviors of employees, but in this study specifically we focus on the influence of P-O fit on organizational citizenship behaviors and job satisfaction.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) can be defined and operationalized in various ways [69]. It generally refers to work-related behavior that "goes above and beyond" that which is dictated by organizational policy and one's job description [70] and therefore cannot be formally rewarded or punished for the presence of lack of, by the organization [71].

OCBs are discretionary and constructive behaviors on the part of the worker, which are neither expected nor required [72] typically include: providing extra help to co-workers, volunteering for special work activities, being particularly considerate of co-workers and customers, making suggestions when problems arise [73], punctuality and attendance that exceeds company norms [74].

In both professional and academic literature of management, considerable attention has begun to be dedicated to understanding the dynamics of extra-role employee behaviors that are thought to contribute positively to organizational performance [75]. OCBs provide benefits both to the organization and its employees in many ways. To the organization go the benefits of having a group of employees who are dedicated to the company. These dedicated workers will stay with the company longer, produce more products of higher quality, and help the firm succeed in many other ways. Logically we can assume that prevalent OCB will foster a better work environment within the organization. This environment, in turn, should elicit greater employee dedication, which yields greater productivity and lowers turnover [76]. These behaviors are crucial to the survival of the organizations perhaps now more than ever because of increases in global competition, emphasis on customer services and reliance on team-based management.

Researchers have identified many different types of OCB, each referring to extra-role or contextual behaviors that are not explicitly required by the organization yet relate and contribute to its effective functioning. These are currently consolidated into five dimensions [77, 78]:

• **Altruism** refers to employee behaviors that either directly or indirectly help another worker in face-to-face interactions on organizationally relevant issues.

• **Civic virtue** refers to employees’ constructive political involvement in an organization. This behavior indicates that one responsibly participates in or is concerned about the life of the organization, e.g., attending important but non-mandatory meeting, keeping abreast of changes in the organizations, reading company announcements and performing functions that help firm image.

• **Conscientiousness** refers to employees’ behaviors going beyond what minimally required pertaining to attendance, punctuality, obeying rules, taking breaks, working hard, and so forth.

• **Sportsmanship** refers to employees’ willingness to disregard minor inconveniences or impositions that may arise in daily work activities.

• **Courtesy** refers to employees’ actions directed toward the prevention of work-related problems with others from occurring, mindful of the effects of one's behavior on others, not abusing others' rights, preventing problems with other people.

Interactionist research suggests that an employee's job attitudes such as satisfaction and organizational commitment result from the relationship between the attributes of the job and the values required in that situation. In other words, jobs that the employee perceives as providing him or her with important values are satisfying, whereas jobs that the employee perceives as being incongruent with his or her values are dis-satisfying [79]. Following this approach, if employees don’t have values that are consistent with those of their organization, and therefore
lacks proper fit, they experience feelings of incompetence and anxiety [80]. On the other hand, employees who fit into the organization will experience more pleasant job attitudes such as satisfaction and organizational commitment [81].

Studies of the impact of P-O fit on individuals find powerful correlations between P-O fit and greater levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors, and career success [82] and negatively related to turnover intentions [83]. In this direction the following hypotheses are proposed:

**P1:** P-O fit will be positively related to employee organizational citizenship behaviors directed at organization.

**P2:** P-O fit will be positively related to employee organizational citizenship behaviors directed at co-workers.

**P3:** P-O fit will be positively related to employee organizational citizenship behaviors directed at students.

**P4:** P-O fit will be positively related to employee job satisfaction.

**Method**

In order to test hypotheses empirically; data was collected from academicians of a State University that is being in the list of Top 500 World Universities located in Turkey. To assure equivalence of the measures in the Turkish and English versions, all scales used in this study were translated into Turkish and then translated independently back into English [84]. The questionnaire measured P-O fit, OCB directed at organization (OCBO), co-workers (OCBC), and students (OCBS) and job satisfaction along with demographic variables. The questionnaire which contained these measures was distributed to 256 randomly selected academicians of 9 faculties of a State University. At the end of the survey 130 questionnaires were returned, for a response rate of 39 percent. Of the academicians in the final sample of 130, 60 percent were men; the age was between 25-45 years and job tenure at the university was between 5-15 years.

**Measures**

All constructs were measured with scales adapted from existing scales. All items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale where “1 strongly agree” and “5 strongly disagree”.

This study assessed perceived P-O fit. In perceived or direct P-O fit, academic personnel estimated the extent to which their values are similar to those of their University. We used the three-item five-point Likert scale developed by Cable and Judge [85]. Items include “My values match those currently in the organization”, “The values and ‘personality’ of this organization reflect my own values and personality”, and “I feel my values ‘match’ or fit this organization and the current employees in this organization”.

OCBO, OCBC and OCBS were measured scales proposed by Lee and Allen [86]. Job satisfaction was measured five items adapted by Brown and Peterson [87]. The demographic variables in the study are age, gender and job tenure. In addition to these, the questionnaire includes the department and academic rank of respondents.

**Analyses**

We used the coefficient alpha to estimate the reliability for scales. Three items for P-O fit measure had alpha reliabilities 0.84. Alpha reliability for OCBO was 0.87, for OCBC was 0.90, for OCBS was 0.81 and for job satisfaction of academicians was 0.85. These results indicate that the internal consistency reliabilities for all of the scales were reasonable.

After the reliability analyses, means and standard deviations for each variable were calculated and a correlation matrix of all variables used in hypothesis testing was created. Means, standard deviations, and correlations among all scales used in the analyses are shown in Table 2. The means and standard deviations are within the expected ranges.

**Table 2. Correlations and Descriptive Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>P-O Fit</th>
<th>Job Sat.</th>
<th>OCBO</th>
<th>OCBC</th>
<th>OCBS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P-O Fit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Sat.</td>
<td>.518 **</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCBO</td>
<td>.441 **</td>
<td>.60 5**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCBC</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>.26 2**</td>
<td>.40 8**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCBS</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.18 4*</td>
<td>.27 3*</td>
<td>.70 4**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.2 9</td>
<td>2.1 1</td>
<td>1.9 6</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The pattern of correlations is supportive of our two hypotheses. That is, correlation coefficients between P-O fit and OCBO and job satisfaction is significant and in the predicted direction. For example, P-O fit correlate with OCBO .44, with job satisfaction .52. Correlation coefficients between P-O fit and OCBC and OCBS is non-significant (weakly correlate), but in the predicted direction. For example, P-O fit correlate with OCBC .14, with OCBS .08.

In addition to correlation analyses, the relationships between P-O fit and OCBO, OCBC, OCBS and job satisfaction were tested in four regression models that included the P-O fit measure as an independent variable. Regression analyses between P-O fit and OCBO, OCBC, OCBS and job satisfaction are summarized in Table 3.

### Table 3. Regression Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Square</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig. (p)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 P-O Fit Job Sat.</td>
<td>17,008</td>
<td>1,908</td>
<td>46,962</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 P-O Fit OCBO</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>1,908</td>
<td>30,922</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 P-O Fit OCBC</td>
<td>7,900</td>
<td>1,908</td>
<td>2,592</td>
<td>.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 P-O Fit OCBS</td>
<td>7,367</td>
<td>1,908</td>
<td>.995</td>
<td>.320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Models with job satisfaction and OCBO were found statistically significant, models with OCBC and OCBS as dependent variables were found statistically non-significant. In the first model (with job satisfaction as dependent variable), P-O fit founds to be significantly related to job satisfaction (FJS 46,962, p .000). In the second model (with OCBO as dependent variable), P-O fit was found to be significantly and positively related to OCBO (FOCBO 30,922; p .000). In the third model (with OCBC as dependent variable), P-O fit was found to be non-significantly, but positively related to OCBC (FOCBC 2,560; p .112). In the fourth model (with OCBS as dependent variable), P-O fit was found to be non-significantly, but positively related to OCBS (FOCBS .995; p .320).

### Results

Results demonstrate that P-O fit is related to OCBO and job satisfaction of academicians. In addition to this P-O fit had not significant impact on OCBC and OCBS.

Results support P1, indicating that P-O fit positively related to academicians’ organizational citizenship behaviors directed at their university. P-O fit positively but weakly related to academicians’ organizational citizenship behaviors directed at their co-workers. Therefore, P2 was not supported. P-O fit positively but weakly related to academicians’ organizational citizenship behaviors directed at their students. Therefore, P3 was not supported. P-O fit positively related to job satisfaction of academicians. Therefore, P4 was supported.

### Limitations and Implications

The limitation of this study concerns the nature of the sample. In this study data were obtained from academic personnel of different faculties of a single State University. Future researches may encompass a comparison of P-O fit on work behaviors of academicians of the private and the state university.

In this study we examined perceived congruence between organizational and employees' values. Recent studies [88] have confirmed that both perceived and actual fit with the organization have independent and interactive relationships with job attitudes. In this regard, it has been noted that perceptions of fit are important in their own right [89, 90, and 91] and as Kristof-Brown et al. [92] have suggested, direct assessments of perceived fit are more susceptible to a common method bias than other measures and shed little light on the characteristics that underlie perceptions of fit-in.

Despite the vast amount of research on P-O fit that has been already done, there still are a lot of research opportunities to investigate the role of P-O fit in organizations. Future research is expected that includes new topics such as the
simultaneous effects of P-O fit on many other work attitudes e.g. job satisfaction, OCB, work performance, work alienation, tenure, career success and turnover intention, in a cross-cultural perspective.

**Conclusion**

OCBs are crucial determinants of an organization’s effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, and overall performance, research about the specific factors that promote OCBs is scarce.

Empirical evidence has shown that a high level of P-O fit is related to a number of positive outcomes. Fit has been positively related to individuals’ job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior and career success and negatively related to turnover [93, 94].

While past research [95] has examined various aspects of fit we specifically focus on the relationship between perceived P-O fit and organizational organizational citizenship behavior directed at organization (OCBO), co-workers (OCBC), and students (OCBS) and job satisfaction of academicians.

Consistent with previous research, we found that P–O was related to individuals’ satisfaction at work. The results reinforce the findings from earlier research [96] that the concept of P-O fit plays an important role for employees in a variety of organizational settings. The results also indicate that although the impact of fit is consistent across organizational cultures, there are differences in levels of job satisfaction and organization commitment between cultures. Finally, this research provides support for the importance of P-O fit in organizations [97] in Turkish State University.

This empirical research shows that P-O fit results were not estimated level in Turkish State University, as compared with literature. The organization chart of universities structured and determined by hierarchical mind in Turkey. Also this hierarchical structure criticized by universities’ staff. Turkish Council of Higher Education (YOK) is at the top of this structure. That Council established with the direction of 1982 constitution law because of the some political, social and economic problems. Turkish Council of Higher Education maintains their activities as at the top of the chart. 53 state and 24 charitable universities’ all activities (financial, personnel, advancement etc.) now determined by that Council in Turkey. Therefore mainly state universities’ activities such as loyalty to the organization, hardwork, creativity, job satisfaction etc. are also affected by this structure. It means the state universities are not independent to take their decisions related with P-O fit.

The empirical findings show that increase P-O fit to increase job satisfaction and to decrease intent to turnover, with the converse of those relationships being true, as well [98]. The findings of our study also support positive relations between P-O fit and job satisfaction.

To motivate employees, executives may need to attend more to procedural concerns to promote commitment, intent to stay, and conscientiousness. More studies should explore how future orientation affects the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of academic staffs in different organizations and in different countries. More cross-cultural studies on a variety of universities are needed to assess the generalizability of our findings.

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